

For Further Reading

- Hiram D. Gales, "Repentance of Believers in the Old Testament." An unpublished master's dissertation, Wheaton College, Ill., 1951. An analysis of the factors involved in this Old Testament doctrine and a treatment of some of the more significant biblical examples.
- Harry A. Ironside, *Exhort to Repent*. New York: American Tract Society, c. 1887. A biblical and practical study that brings home the absolute need of every Christian to experience personal repentance.
- William Douglas Chaddock, "For Deliverance and Freedom, the Unfaded Doctrine of Repentance," *Interpretation*, 4:3 (July, 1950), 271-281. A readable survey that questions repentance as an Old Testament doctrine but gives an outline of recent thought on repentance in the Bible as a whole.

24. Faith*

A. PRESERVED AND PATRARCHAL REVELATIONS. Although God laid down no explicit human response as a condition for a man's participation under the Eberite testament (Gen. 3:15), the proper least attitude was still necessary if any given individual was to be reckoned with the seed of the woman rather than with the seed of the serpent. Adam demonstrated his faith in the divine promise (that the woman would produce redemptive offspring) by the very name that he gave to Eve (3:20). Eve confessed her dependence upon God as she then bore her seed (4:1), and Genesis 4:4 notes that God had respect unto Abel, but not unto Cain. The type of offering presented by each of these latter was significant,² but the stress of the Genesis context falls upon Cain's improper attitude of spirit (vs. 5,9). Thus Hebrews 11:4 summarizes the situation, saying, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain . . . and through it he being dead yet speaketh." The general proposition then, that Abel yet speaks, is this: "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him" (Heb. 11:6).

The patriarch Abraham believed in Yahweh, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6; cf. Rom. 4:15). The Hebrew root of this verb "believe" is *āman*, "to be steady, firm, or trustworthy; trust in."³ The basic idea is therefore that of "confirming" of causing

* BIBLE READING: Genesis 15; Malachi 2.

¹ *Unpublished Reading: Vos, Biblical Theology*, pp. 36, 109.

² John H. Hayes, *The History of the Kingdom of Israel*, pp. 459-474.

³ Norman H. Smith, *Meaning and Structure of the Book of Hosea* (London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1953), pp. 30-40, 20-69.

⁴ See below, pp. 27-29.

⁵ *Unpublished Reading: Koblitz, *Lessons in Yehosh's Testamental Life*, p. 61. Thus Raven, *The History of the Religion of Israel*, p. 468, will agree, "Faith was the great product of faith. Nevertheless it did not begin with him. The beginning of the doctrine of faith is in the story of Abraham," through of Abel.*

man to find support. Vos terms it a "causative-productive" and worked, in a similar vein, has stated:

"It is a subjective causative, and expresses the acquisition or exhibition of the firmness, security, reliability, faithfulness, which lies in the root meaning of the verb, in or with respect to its object."⁴

Yet object, in Scripture's discussion of Abraham's faith, was none other than God Himself. The most generally satisfactory translation, therefore, of *āman* (believe) in Genesis 15:6, and the translation that best brings out this idea of "relying upon," or of "fastening one's confidence upon," is simply this: "Abraham trusted in God."

To such a definition of faith appear the following six exhortations. 1) Faith is a matter of personal commitment to God. As Vos well points out, the development of a man's faith in God does not consist of assent to the veracity of a statement followed by an ultimate trust in a Person, because the Person of God transcends human verification. Back of the belief, the assent, therefore there lies an antecedent trust, doubtless from the subsequent trust.⁵ Faith may therefore exhibit a quantitative development, but not a qualitative one. It does not evolve from doubt to trust. A man either has committed himself to the historical God of salvation or he has not.

2) Such faith composed the one preeminent condition for a man's inheriting the blessings of the testament. Faith constitutes the basic requirement from which all other aspects of commitment will follow, even the repentance which, in practical outworkings, precedes it. Abraham's receiving of the testament was thus conditioned by his "faithful heart" (Neh. 9:8). So also today, as 1900 years ago (or over 2000 years ago, in the case of Abraham), the question, "What must I do to be saved?" is answered by the same simple but profound truth, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Act 16:31).

3) Faith in the Person, if sincere, will be followed by a faith in that is, an assent to 1. His propositional declarations. Abraham therefore committed himself to the truth of the promise that he could receive a seed as numerous as the stars (Gen. 15:5), impossible as this promise seemed at the time (Heb. 11:12). Surely, one must admit, laughed at first in disbelief at the prospect of a couple, as old as they were, having a child (Gen. 18:13); cf. Abraham's own, similar attitude (17:17). From this hesitancy, then, arose the ironical name given by God to this promised son, Yitzhak (Isaac), "he laughs" (17:19). But, subsequently, Sarah went so far as to become gaily of falsehood, as she attempted to repudiate her own skepticism

⁴ *Unpublished Theology*, p. 98.

⁵ *Unpublished Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 409.

⁶ Op. cit., p. 98.

(18:15). Fundamentally, her acknowledgement of God was genuine; she became strong and consistent in faith, "since she counted him faithful who had promised" (Heb. 11:11); and she ended by giving a happy turn to this name *Yehoy*: "God hath made me to laugh, every one that heareth will laugh with me" (Gen. 21:6). So today, Christ demands of His own their conformity to His truth, particularly to the propositions of the Bible, to which He Himself was so thoroughly committed. Christ indeed considered faith in the Bible and faith in Himself inseparable: "For if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:46, 47). The Pharisees of Jesus' day did not really believe in the Mosaic supernaturalism that they professed, and, so they did not accept Christ but similarly, any man who now questions Scripture, even this same Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, cannot possess a true conformity to the mind of Christ, in which this aspect of supernaturalism bulks so large.

4) Abraham's faith included both the negative renunciation of his own ability and his positive reliance upon God. Abraham was willing to go so far as to sacrifice his son Isaac when God ordered him to do so. He had faith in Yahweh's ability even to raise Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:19),⁸ as is witnessed by his statement of confidence, at the point where he and his son left the servants, saying, "We will come again to you" (Gen. 22:5).

5) Though qualitatively speaking, Abraham's faith remained constant, as a basic commitment to God, this did not mean that quantitatively speaking he stood without need of more faith. As a man once exclaimed to Christ Himself, "I believe, help Thou mine unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). The matter of Abraham's laughter over the birth of Isaac has already been noted, and just two verses after the supreme description of Abraham's faith comes a questioning on Abraham's part, a seeking of proof from God, that showed his need even then for additional faith (Gen. 15:8).

6) Abraham's faith involved both a subjective and an objective side. As Vos puts it, his faith was an "affirmation of divine unity; hence, 'It consisted, subjectively of an affirmation, that is, of a state of mind, 'the attitude of faith'; but it consisted also of an affirmation that was directed toward the divine object. For anyone can possess faith, in the subjective sense of being sincere, but he may be a sincere even-must! Abraham's faith, however, was directed; it involved an entering into God's objective promises, 'to incorporate the supernatural.'"

The next statement, "hence also he received him in a figure," lends further emphasis to the reality of Abraham's faith in such a manner. It is not that Isaac was as a type of Christ's sacrificial death in obedience to the Father, or as a type of His resurrecting, which Scripture nowhere expressly teaches. Isaac himself was the one who died figuratively in the aim and was thus figuratively resurrected.

⁸Vos, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-102.

In both of these respects, then, Abraham became the "father of the faithful." Subjectively, he establishes the pattern for our attitude of faith (Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:18); and objectively, he serves as an exemplar (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 4:18); and she ended by giving a happy turn to this name *Yehoy*: "God hath made me to laugh, every one that heareth will laugh with me" (Gen. 21:6). So today, Christ demands of His own their conformity to His truth, particularly to the propositions of the Bible, to which He Himself was so thoroughly committed. Christ indeed considered faith in the Bible and faith in Himself inseparable: "For if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:46, 47). The Pharisees of Jesus' day did not really believe in the Mosaic supernaturalism that they professed, and, so they did not accept Christ but similarly, any man who now questions Scripture, even this same Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, cannot possess a true conformity to the mind of Christ, in which this aspect of supernaturalism bulks so large.

4) Abraham's faith included both the negative renunciation of his own ability and his positive reliance upon God. Abraham was willing to go so far as to sacrifice his son Isaac when God ordered him to do so. He had faith in Yahweh's ability even to raise Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:19),⁸ as is witnessed by his statement of confidence, at the point where he and his son left the servants, saying, "We will come again to you" (Gen. 22:5).

Two specialized Hebrew terms appear in Genesis as further descriptions of the faith of the patriarchs. Abraham spoke of the *yir'a*, the "fear" of God (Gen. 20:11). The connotation of this noun *yir'a* is not one of terror towards God for this would not be true of those who trust in Him (1 John 4:18), but rather of respect and reverence toward the Heavenly Father. "Fear" is faith, as it signifies to His will. "The heart of man's response to the testimony is therefore to 'fear' God" (1 Kings 17:35, 36, 38, 39). Scripture reiterates, "Fear [from the verbal root *yir'a*], show faith in, God, and [as necessarily follows in *yir'a*] keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Exod. 12:13). Jacob then employed a second, related term of man's "fear" of God as the *yidura*, the "Fear" of his father Isaac. When he invoked God as the *yidura*, the "Fear" of his father Isaac, "that is, he conceived of God in terms of the One whom his father revered" (Gen. 31:42, 53). Jacob's very citation of Isaac witnesses to the reality and depth of the latter's religion,¹⁰ to the impression that a father's godly fear has upon his son, and to the lasting effect of one's paternal faith.¹¹ This faith then continued to characterize both Jacob and his son Joseph, down to their very deaths in Egypt. For

See above, p. 274. Vos lacked realizing that Abraham continued to remain ignorant of his destination, after his call in Haran as well, claiming that God's designation of Genesis in Gen. 12:7 "came as a surprise to him." *Ibid.*, p. 97. Before reaching Haran, however, Abraham and the rest of the party under Jacob knew that their destination was to be Canaan (Gen. 11:31).

See above, pp. 187, 204, 205.

A point needed to clarify Vos' criticism of Isaac's, as a passive period in re-derivation, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

Observations by Professor John Murray in classes at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

their trust in God's word, as it had first been revealed to Abraham, was evidenced by their commands to be buried in the Promised Land of Canaan, even though it had yet to be possessed (47:29; 50:2, 25; cf. Heb. 11:22).

J. MOSAIC REVELATIONS. Sinai, despite its external regulations, was basically a matter of heart-felt faith. The testamental condition was indeed stated in the following legalistic phraseology: "If ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep my testament, then . . ." (Ex. 19:5).

But why must Israel obey the Ten Commandments? . . . The reason is given in the verse which precedes the Commandments: "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2). The essence of the faith, therefore, is . . . that Jehovah was and is their Saviour, and He has saved them, saved them now in order that they may do His Will . . . being truly thankful to a Husband-God who has never been anything else than faithful to the be-
gining.¹⁸

So Moses' ministry was one that throughout its course placed the emphasis upon faith (cf. Heb. 11:24-29). The people believed Moses at the first (Ex. 4:31); and, following their deliverance at the Red Sea, "the people feared Yahweh and they believed in Yahweh, and his servant Moses" (14:31). God's statement of this free, prior reception from Egypt served as His introduction to the actual words of the testament (19:4), and the people, in correspondingly appropriate faith, accepted the testament before ever they knew its detailed, external conditions (v. 8). The legalities do indeed follow, but only as an application and as a demonstration of the fundamental requirement of grateful faith: it cannot be emphasized too strongly that Exodus 19 (faith and salvation) precedes Exodus 20 (the fruition of moral works)!¹⁹

A fundamental failure of Scottish dispensationalism is its slighted inability to appreciate the Sinaitic law as a part of the one gracious testament, which had been revealed immediately after man's fall. This same grace continues and develops progressively throughout the rest of human history and the rest of the Bible. The New Testament makes it clear that the testament (to Abraham), "confirmed beforehand by God, the law, which came [at least the well-known] 44 hundred and thirty years after, doth not disannul, so as to make the promise of none effect" (Gal. 3:17). Yet the notes of the Scofield Reference Bible assert:

¹⁸Scottish Mosaic and Sovereign: a Study in the Book of Moses (London, S.C.M. Press, 1931), pp. 54-55, 57.
¹⁹Scott above, p. 91, and cf. Laven, op. cit., pp. 469-470, and John Murray, *The Covenant of Grace*, 14th Cl. Press, *An Outline of Hebrew History*, p. 25, and John Murray, op. cit., p. 23.

"The Dispensation of Promise ended when Israel really accepted the law (Ex. 19:8). Grace had prepared a deliverer (Moses), provided a sacrifice for the guilty, and by divine power brought them out of bondage (Ex. 19:4); but at Sinai they exchanged grace for law."²⁰

As an initial criticism, however, one must object that since the testament is monergistically devised and imposed by God, such an assertion would suggest that God had in some way tricked Israel into accepting what was not really in their best interests. The context, on the contrary, makes it clear that there was nothing whatsoever "trick" about Israel's claiming heirship under the Sinaitic testament. There was the automatic response of grateful hearts, trusting God and relying in His gracious adoption. Sincerely to dismiss the whole of the Sinaitic commandments as "a ministry of condemnation and of death,"²¹ is grossly to misapprehend the Old Testament. The law was by no means an impossible burden (Deut. 30:11-14). Israel loved the law (Ps. 119; 139:107), which it lauds as "sweeter than honey" (19:10). After all, its statutes were their highway, albeit anticipatory, to heaven itself.

The fundamental requirement of the law was faith, belief in God (Deut. 1:32; 9:23). Moses explained: "And now, Israel, what doth Yahweh thy God require of thee, but to fear [have faith in] Yahweh thy God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Yahweh thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 10:12). Scofield, however, insists:

"As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ. The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ, with good works as a fruit of salvation."²²

The very existence, however, of Moses in heaven (cf. Matt. 17:3), is proof enough that good works were not "the condition of [his] salvation." Rather, as the verse previously quoted demonstrates, the essential matter both for him and for us is the fear and love of God. Then, that Israel should "walk in all His ways" became the natural expression of their love. Obedience constituted just as much a fruit of salvation for them as it does now for us. Compare the wording of Deuteronomy 6:2: "Fear Yahweh [the basic point], to keep all His statutes [the result]."

Christ declared that the essence of the law is this: "Thou shalt

²⁰20, contrast Murray's definition of obedience as simply recapitulated faith, *ibid.*, op. cit., pp. 19-20.
²¹ibid., p. 93, for the true significance of II Cor. 3:7-9, see below, note 25.
²²See also in this regard John Murray's excellent discussion of the three New Testament usages of the phrase "under law," *Principles of Christian Ethics*, 187-200, 201-65, and especially p. 190.
²³ibid., p. 1115.

love Yahweh thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:5, cf. Mark 12:28-30). Thus the opening commandments of the "Ten words" lay down the attitudes of mind toward God that the Lord expects of His own, for example, Commandment III, that men should show reverence for the name of Yahweh (—the very person of God);¹⁸ and only subsequently appear the moral requirements of the Decalogue. In the same vein, Moses repeatedly stressed that the law's primary requirement was that of a circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16), of a seeking of God with one's whole being (4:29). It was this wholehearted commitment to God in faith that distinguished the heroes of the wilderness period (Num. 14:24; 22:12). The entire nation of Israel, in fact, found deliverance when those who were perishing looked in faith on the brazen serpent—no works involved! (Num. 21:40, cf. John 3:14).

Appeals, moreover, on the basis of the gracious Abrahamic testament with its requirements of faith and of a humble and yielded heart continued to be made by those who were living chronologically under the Sinaitic testament (Ex. 32:12,13; Lev. 26:40-42; Deut. 1:22-31). For the Sinaitic is identified with all other Biblical testaments in its basic features of faith and obedience.¹⁹ Thus the New Testament affirms that the legislation of the Pharisees was actually a perversion of the faith that the law really taught (Matt. 23:23). God's righteousness all along, as these students of the law should have known, was righteousness by faith, not by works (Rom. 9:32).

C. REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN DAVID. The time of Israel's consolidation in Canaan was marked by a general departure from faith in God (Judg. 21:25), but the Lord continued to raise up great leaders of faith (cf. Heb. 11:30-32). At the very beginning of the period, for example, Joshua had recognized that Israel might readily be led astray into a reliance upon the gods of Canaan, but he made crystal clear the stand that he personally had taken (and which he expected the nation to take) — "As for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh" (Josh. 24:15).

David's early hardships taught him the basic necessity of faith. When in flight from Saul and having barely escaped with his life from the hands of the Philistines (1 Sam. 21:13), he was led to compose such lines as these:

"This poor man cried, and Yahweh heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.
Oh taste and see that Yahweh is good.

Blessed is the man that taketh refuge in Him!" (Ps. 34:6, 8).

¹⁸See above, p. 144.

¹⁹See above, page 212.

When even his few followers threatened to turn against him, we read that David "strengthened himself in Yahweh his God" (1 Sam. 30:6). Later on, when betrayed by his own sinful nature, he revealed that his confidence lay in a broken and a contrite heart, one which was fully trusting in the mercy of God (51:17). His psalms abound with sentiments such as "I love Thee" (18:1); "Hope thou in God" (42:5); "Wait thou upon God" (62:5). "He only is my rock" (62:6); and compose Asaph's meditation, "Whom have I but Thee?" (73:25). David stands out as the greatest Biblical representative of personal faith in God. His famous words in Psalm 37 summarize indeed man's whole attitude of response under the testament:

"Commit thy way unto Yahweh,

Trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.

Rest in Yahweh, and wait patiently for Him" (vv. 5, 7, cf. 119:7, 131:8).

In the next period, Solomon's best known proverb (3:5, 6) teaches this same principle of faith in God rather than of reliance upon one's own understanding (cf. Prov. 16:3). Solomon emphasized that the great need of Israel, and of all nations, is humbly to seek God's face (II Chron. 7:14); and, the positive conclusion of his book of Ecclesiastes states, as previously noted, that man's chief duty is the fear of God (12:13). Ellphaz, whose words seem to have been first revealed to Israel at about this time, indeed misjudged Job personally, but his general approach was a sound one: "Is not thy fear of God thy confidence?" (4:6); and again, "If thou return to the Almighty thou shalt be built up" (22:23). That "faith is the victory" even against overwhelming odds, was then borne out in experience by the deeds of the pious among Judah's ninth century kings. Specifically, Asa advanced against his Cushite foes with the resolute prayer, "In Thy name we go" (II Chron. 14:11); and Jehoshaphat experienced his greatest success, following upon his ringing charge, "Believe in Yahweh your God, so shall ye be established" (20:20). Equally victorious, though not outwardly so, was Zechariah the priest, receiving a martyr's crown at the hands of Jeash, as he remained faithful unto death (24:30).

D. PROPHETIC REVOLUTIONS. The prophets reacted against an undue externalism in their people's religion and stressed the need for their return to simple but heartfelt faith in Yahweh. Snath puts it this way, in respect to the earliest eighth century prophet to Israel: "Hosea's contribution is that the relation between God and His people Israel is personal."²⁰ "O God loves man, and, in respect to the currently expanding personal response,

²⁰Idem, p. 30. But when he qualifies this relationship of personal faith by stating that Hosea is "beyond question the best prophet of a new tradition, he demonstrates an almost total disbelief in the historicity of Abraham, David, and others of those mentioned above, as they are described in Scripture.

"... on man's side it consists of dutiful love and humble trust... To love God with all that a man is and has, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices, more indeed than anything else."²¹

Man then composed what has been called the greatest verse in the Bible, several only to John 3:16, as he described the response of man's faith in terms of fear and humility: "He hath showed thee, oh man, what is good, and what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, and to love *hesedh* [loyalty to the conditions of the covenant], and to love humbly with thy God" (6:8). Joel spoke of "turning to Yahweh" (2:13); and Amos, of "seeking" Him (5:4; cf. Zeph. 2:3). Hosea is further distinguished by a peculiarly meaningful use of the verb *yāda* to "know," and its derivatives. He exclaims, for example, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee" (Hos. 4:6). Or again, "Let us know, let us follow on to know Yahweh" (6:3). In reference to these passages, Smith comments,

"We are accustomed to follow the Greek tradition and to interpret knowledge as being mainly intellectual. The Hebrews did not do this... Hosea here envisages a growing personal knowledge of God."²²

It is true that Smith's antithesis between faith and intellect is an unhappy one; and his thought is doubtless conditioned by his neo-or-thodox limitation of revelation to an existential, non-propositional knowledge of God.²³ Hosea himself makes it clear that faith is inseparable apart from one's rational assent to propositions (cf. the stress upon words in Hos. 14:2).²⁴ This axiomatic truth, the Hebrew Scriptures demonstrate throughout,²⁵ for faith is by definition a mental activity. But Hosea, in these verses about "knowledge," is demanding a consistent rationalism, knowledge that arises from God's special revelation, that is validated by man's personal encounter with the God who is trusted, that is truly believed with the mind, and that produces the appropriate response in a man's life.²⁶ There is nothing more vain than knowledge that is falsely professed but not really believed. So Hosea insists, "It is time to seek Yahweh" (10:12); for and it, is the heart of religion.

²¹Ibid., pp. 46, 49.

²²Ibid., p. 42.

²³See above, pp. 16, 13, 34.

²⁴See Gunkel, H. Clark's *Intuitive analysis*, "Zeph. and Amos," *Christendom Today*, 1:10, 11 (Feb. 18 & March 4, 1927).

²⁵See above, pp. 71, 72.

²⁶Jacob thus speaks of the three-fold aspect of faith in the Old Testament: faith as knowledge, as trust, and as active obedience, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 174.

FAITH

313

With this emphasis upon faith, Isaiah's prophecies particularly abound.²⁷ His word to the vacillating Ahaz was, "If you will not believe [aman] in the covenant; consider God as steady or trustworthy], surely ye shall not be established [aman in the passive, be steadied, be able to last out]" (Isa. 7:9). Compare also the following verses: Isaiah 8:17, "I will wait for Yahweh, that hideeth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him"; 26:3, 4, "Thou wilt keep them in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed [steadily, supported] on Thee; because he trusteth in thee; trust ye in Yahweh for ever"; 28:16, "Behold, I lay in Zion a precious corner-stone [Messiah]; he that believeth shall not be in haste [or, be anxious]; 30:15, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength"; 50:10, "Who is among you that feareth Yahweh, that obeyeth the voice of His servant? Let him trust in the name of Yahweh, and rely upon his God." The very troubles and uncertainties of the eighth century international scene tended to force Isaiah's contemporaries to a deeper faith in God (28:16). Isaiah's sovereign, Hezekiah, thus became Israel's preeminent king of faith (II Kings 18:5), even as Josiah, in the next century, became her preeminent king of the book (23:25).

In the later prophetic period, Jeremiah, from his "time-worn" existence as a man against the crowd,²⁸ came clearly to perceive the necessity for individualistic faith in God. He observed, negatively, that man cannot trust in himself (Jer. 10:23) or in other men (17:5). Positively then, man must give glory to Yahweh (33:16), trusting in Him (17:7) and glorying in the fact "that he hath understanding and knoweth Me" (9:23, 24). His own bitter experiences during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin (588-597 B.C.) cast Jeremiah even more unreservedly upon the faithfulness of his God. He could thus be used the more effectively as the mouthpiece of the Lord, joyfully to proclaim, "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart" (29:13). The reason for the rejection of the Samaritans was that during these years they tried to "fear" Yahweh and yet at the same time serve their own idols (II Kings 17:33, 41); and men simply cannot do both!

Perhaps the most famous single Biblical expression of faith came through Jeremiah's contemporary, Habakkuk. This man of God spoke of the pride of Babylon, the empire which was then rising to dominance, but also of that power by which the Babylonians, or any other force, could be overcome: "Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4). The meaning of Habakkuk's "faith" is not that of the "stiff upper lip," of

²⁷ Cf. Rawn, op. cit., pp. 470-474. "No other Old Testament book contains such a large element of the gospel as Isaiah," p. 429.

²⁸Ibid. see above, p. 312.

²⁹See above, p. 230.

a man holding out, in his own "powerful" faithfulness, until the crisis be past.³⁰ Rather, as the contrast with Babylonian pride demonstrates, and as the subsequent context illustrates, the faith consists of a commitment to God, of one's faithful trusting in Him to accomplish what is, humanly-speaking, impossible (3:15, 19, cf. Rom. 1:17).

It is necessary, however, to ask in each case of faith that is found in the Old Testament, faith for what? Paul, in the epistle to the Romans, means faith for the Christian's justification from sin, while Habakkuk speaks simply of faith for his people's deliverance from the power of Babylon. Other examples of faith's more limited goals are Job 2:13, 14, Job's faith for recovery from a locust plague, and Job 3:9, 10, the Assyrians' faith for God's sparing of their city Nineveh (cf. Isa. 7:4). But Isaiah 1:18 preaches faith for the forgiveness of sin, just as does Romans 1:17, and Ezekiel in the exile stresses faith for a man's deliverance from the death that his transgressions would otherwise entail (Ezek. 18:30-32). The latter's contemporary, Daniel, went still further, teaching fidelity to God, even should one's life be forfeited. His three friends thus demonstrated their supreme faith to Nebuchadnezzar, by stating, "If our God whom we serve be able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, He will deliver us out of thy hand, oh king. But if not, be it known unto thee, oh king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Dan. 3:17, 18).³¹ Here is a faith that looks beyond life to heaven itself. The point of all these passages, though, is this: Whatever the faith that was described in any given context might have been for, it was a faith in Yahweh; and it is this commitment to Him that constitutes the continuity of the testament. Such commitment was indeed expressed and demonstrated in moral and ceremonial obedience (see the following topics); but "behind all demands of morality, and behind all sacramental custom, there is a personal relationship with God,"³² namely, that of saving faith. The undated 138th Psalm may serve then as a final exhibition of this inseparable relationship.

³⁰Though this has become liberalist's standard interpretation of the passage, cf. Larchesse's handbook, *The Books of Nehemiah, Habakkuk and Zephaniah* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1920), p. 77, which speaks of Paul's "leading into A.C. 3, verse 14, p. 465." It is often difficult to determine whether there is any thought of salvation from sin as it occurs in certain expressions, for example, Isa. 12:2, 3, There are, however, a few passages in which the epithet "captain of salvation" is certainly present. Such is Isa. 61:5, 6.

³¹The marginal translation in the Revised Version is not only a more natural rendering of the Aramaic than that found in the text — "If it be so, our God is not delivered. To deliver the former reading need not be a reflection on the power of Yahweh, for should God refuse to deliver, it would be for good reasons known only to Himself.

³²See, e.g., *ibid.*, p. 55.

Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Yahweh.
I wait for Yahweh, my soul doth wait.

And in His word do I hope
For with Yahweh there is mercy (faithfulness to the testament).

And with Him is precious redemption.
And He will redeem Israel!

From all his iniquities (vv. 1, 3, 7, 8).

For Further Reading:

- Horstius B. Wierle, *Biblical Doctrines*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1929. Chapter 13 consists of a significant study of the biblical doctrine of faith.
- William D. Kewell, *The Old Testament Doctrine of Salvation*, Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath-school Work, 1924. The study tends to give insufficient attention to the fulfiling of salvation in Christ, but it contains much on the Old Testament teaching concerning redemption.
- Carstairs Maclean, *What Is Faith?* New York, The Macmillan Co., 1935. A defense against Modernism of the biblical concept of faith, in its various aspects.

25. Morals*

Genuine conversion eventuates in sanctification. The reality of Israel's personal relationship with God, the sincerity, that is, of their faith, was demonstrated by the actualization of their personal obedience to Him (Ex. 15:25; Deut. 8:2).¹ Faith without works is dead (James 2:17; cf. Deut. 10:3, 4), as truly in the Old Testament as in the New. The Sinaitic testament makes it clear that if, and only if, the Israelites obeyed God's voice would He be their God (Ex. 10:5). Indeed, "in every important affair of life the Israelite has to account himself 'in every important affair of life the Israelite has to account himself something which God demands.'"² On the one hand, God reveals certain demands, the execution of which served as actual symbols of the redemption that He was yet to accomplish. Even within "ceremonial obedience" (topics 20-28 that follow). But on the other hand, and without "claiming a difference of dignity,"³ one seems justified in stating that God's ethical demands. His demands for "moral obedience" (this topic), constituted the more fundamental means for a man's demonstration of the validity of his faith (cf. Acts 10:35). The ceremonies in many cases were, in fact, added to

*BIBLE READING: Amos 5, Ecclesiastes 20.

Colophon Reading: Vos, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 64-69, 102-103, 141-156.

Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 188-191, 471-475.

¹See above, pp. 80, 91, 297.

²Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 182.

³See, e.g., *ibid.*